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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 20 September 2016 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I am compelled to draw your attention to the very fragile, unstable situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem — the Territory that constitutes the State of Palestine — due to the continued illegal policies and practices being pursued by Israel, the occupying Power, in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and in blatant disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians held hostage under its occupation.

The suffering and hardships of the Palestinian people are growing exponentially under the impact of Israel's illegal and punitive measures and the diminished prospects for peace are dwindling further. The consequences of inaction are far-reaching, especially in light of the volatile situation on the ground and throughout the region, and require urgent attention and action by the international community to redress this ongoing injustice and to salvage any prospects for peace, if even possible. We call for such action at a time when world leaders congregate at the United Nations during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly to tackle a host of crises, particularly regarding the immense refugee and migrant crisis and the ongoing threats to international peace and security. In this regard, we firmly believe that Israel's nearly 50-year foreign military occupation of Palestine poses one of the most significant and longest-standing threats to international peace and security and as such should be given urgent attention.

We also must inform you that lethal and indiscriminate force continues to be routinely meted out by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian civilian population, causing wilful and wanton death and injury in grave violation of international humanitarian law. Since our last letter to you on 8 September 2016 (A/ES-10/732-S/2016/770), more than six Palestinians, as well as one Jordanian citizen, have been killed by Israeli occupying forces. Moreover, one Palestinian child was

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killed by an illegal Israeli settler in an apparent deliberate hit-and-run car attack. In this regard, we must add to the record of Israeli crimes following the deaths and injuries of Palestinian civilians:

- On Saturday, 10 September 2016, Lama Marwan Mousa, age 6, was run over and killed by an illegal Israeli settler in the village of Al-Khader south of Bethlehem, on the road to the illegal Israeli settlement of "Efrat" in the southern occupied West Bank. Lama was standing on the sidewalk in front of her house when a fast-moving vehicle approached and hit her. The impact reportedly broke her neck. She was pronounced dead at the scene.
- On Monday, 12 September 2016, two Palestinian teenagers, Naim Ahmad Ziad Abu Daoud, age 17, and Iyad Naim Abu Daoud, age 19, were critically injured after an Israeli military bus ran them over in Al-Fahs area south of Al-Khalil in southern occupied West Bank. According to eyewitnesses, the two teenagers were visiting relatives nearby when they were run over, and the Israeli military vehicle fled away from the scene. Both boys sustained life-threatening injuries and remain in critical condition.
- Overnight on Thursday, 15 September 2016, Mohammed Ahmad Al-Sarrahin, age 30, died after succumbing to wounds sustained earlier that day when occupying forces raided the village of Beit Ula in the district of Al-Khalil and shot live fire at Mohammed while attempting to detain him.
- On Friday, 16 September 2016, Israeli occupying forces shot and killed Fares Moussa Mohammed Khaddour, age 18, and seriously wounded his fiancée, Raghad Abdullah Khaddour, age 18, at the entrance of the illegal settlement "Kiryat Arba" in Al-Khalil in southern occupied West Bank. Tragically for their family and friends, Raghad is the sister of Majd Khaddour, who was killed by Israeli occupying forces at the same intersection in June 2016.
- On Friday, 16 September 2016, Israeli occupying forces shot dead Abdul Ghani Shaludi, age 26, at the entrance of Tel Rumeida neighbourhood in Al-Khalil's Old City. Israeli occupying forces prevented a Palestinian Red Crescent ambulance from reaching the scene.
- On Friday, 16 September 2016, Israeli occupying forces shot and killed Said Al-Amr, age 28, a Jordanian youth in occupied East Jerusalem at the Damascus Gate in the Old City.
- On Friday, 16 September 2016, Mohammed Thalji Al-Rajabi, age 15, was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near the Old City of Al-Khalil, making him the third Palestinian killed by Israeli occupying forces in less than 24 hours.
- On Friday, 16 September 2016, in the besieged Gaza Strip, Israeli occupying forces shot and injured two Palestinians after clashes broke out during protests east of Al-Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza, when several youths gathered near the border fence to protest Israel's policies in the occupied West Bank and the ongoing Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip.
- On Sunday, 18 September 2016, Israeli occupying forces opened live fire and injured a Palestinian man, Bahaa Odeh, age 20, outside the illegal Israeli settlement "Efrat", south of Bethlehem. Eyewitnesses at the scene said that the Israeli occupying forces left him to bleed on the ground.

- On Monday, 19 September 2016, Israeli occupying forces shot and killed Muhannad Al-Rajaby, age 21, and Ameer Al-Rajaby, age 17, near Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil.

- Today, 20 September 2016, a 16-year-old child, Issa Salem Tarayra, was shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces near the town of Bani Naim, east of Al-Khalil.

The killing and injury of Palestinian men, women and children under Israeli occupation, such as the numerous tragic crimes detailed above, must be addressed. It cannot be that a people under occupation for nearly five decades can be left defenceless, denied the protections of international law, including humanitarian law and human rights law, while the occupying Power is appeased and permitted to continue with its flagrant impunity, disrespecting both the rule of law and the sanctity of human life.

The occupying Power also persists with all of its other policies and measures against the defenceless Palestinian population in grave violation of international law. This includes the continued building and expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, home demolitions, the arrest and detention of Palestinian civilians, as well as other collective measures against the Palestinian people, which include draconian restrictions of movement by the use of military curfews, closures and checkpoints throughout the occupied State of Palestine as well as the continuation of its immoral and illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The destructive impact of the above-mentioned Israeli violations is immense, as reflected in rising tensions, deteriorating socioeconomic conditions and deepening anger and frustration among the Palestinian civilian population living under this nearly half-century-old occupation. With the high number of deaths over the past week, we call again on the international community, particularly the Security Council, to act now to provide protection to the Palestinian people and to diffuse this volatile situation, which clearly constitutes a threat to international peace and security. As we have stated in the past, the Palestinian people cannot remain the exception to the international commitments to and obligations under international law, including the obligation to protect civilians from atrocities and grave breaches, i.e. war crimes. The tragic events listed above only provide more evidence of the occupying Power's total disregard for the lives and rights of the Palestinian people as well as its total contempt for international law. The time is now for the international community to finally bring an end to Israel's impunity and to bring an end to this brutal, illegal nearly 50-year-long occupation in order to bring overdue justice to the Palestinian people and so that the Palestinian people can finally live in freedom and dignity in their own independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

This letter is in follow-up to our 595 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 8 September 2016 (A/ES-10/732-S/2016/770) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the

Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations